

## Message Text

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DRAFTED BY: NEA/ARP:GQLUMSDEN, JR:BH

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 130965

FOLLOWING REPEAT MOGADISCIO 749 ACTION SECSTATE INFO ADDIS  
ABABA CAIRO LONDON JIDDA SANAA 27 MAY

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOGADISCIO 0749

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, SO, UR

SUBJECT: ARAB JOURNALISTS VISIT BERBERA, DENY SOVIET BASE CHARGES

REF: MOGADISCIO 0745

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. IN PRESS CONFERENCE HELD IN MOGADISCIO EVENING OF MAY 24, SALEH FARID, DIRECTOR OF ARAB LEAGUE PRESS DEPARTMENT, TOLD NEWSMEN HE HAD VISITED BERBERA SAME MORNING WITH GROUP OF ARAB JOURNALISTS. FARID SAID QTE WE SAW NO RPT NO TRACE OF ANY EXISTENCE OF A FOREIGN BASE OR MISSILES AS HAS BEEN PROPAGATED BY THE IMPERIALIST PRESS. UNQTE. PRESS CONFERENCE DESCRIBED IN SONNA BULLETIN OF MAY 25. FARID'S STATEMENTS ALSO CARRIED IN OCTOBER STAR, MAY 26.

2. FARID ALSO TOLD NEWSMEN THAT SOMALIA WAS NOT THE FIRST ARAB COUNTRY TO BE BRANDED BY IMPERIALIST PROPAGANDA WHOSE AIM AND  
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OBJECTIVES IS (SIC) TO SPOIL IMAGE AND PRESTIGE OF THE DEVELOPING

COUNTRIES. FARID CITED AS EXAMPLE IMPERIALIST CLAIM THAT QTE PORT OF ALEXANDRIA IS SOVIET MILITARY BASE UNQTE, BUT SAID THIS HAS BEEN PROVED TO BE PURE FABRICATION.

3. TWELVE-MAN ARAB LEAGUE JOURNALIST DELEGATION HAS BEEN IN SOMALIA TO COVER DROUGHT CONDITIONS. SINCE MAY 20, GROUP HAS BEEN VISITING DROUGHT RELIEF CAMPS THROUGHOUT COUNTRY. GROUP WAS ACCOMPANIED BY SRC MEMBER LT. COL. ABDIRIZAK MOHAMED ABUBAKAR, CHAIRMAN OF SOCIAL COMMITTEE. END UNCLASSIFIED

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4. ARAB AMBASSADORS IN MOGADISCIO DID NOT RPT NOT MEET WITH SALEH FARID AND GROUP OF JOURNALIST PRIOR TO THEIR BERBERA VISIT, NOR DID THEY KNOW BERBERA VISIT WAS PLANNED. SOME BELIEVE THAT GSDR DELIBERATELY KEPT JOURNALISTS AWAY FROM ARAB DIPLOMATIC CORPS HERE IN ATTEMPT TO MANIPULATE THEM TO SOMALIA'S ADVANTAGE AND BECAUSE GSDR BELIEVES SOME ARAB ENVOYS HERE ARE UNRELIABLE IN THEIR SUPPORT OF SOMALIA'S INTERESTS.

5. BOTH SYRIAN AMBASSADOR, WHO IS DEAN OF ARAB DIPLOMATIC CORPS, AND SAUDI CHARGE TOLD ME MAY 26 THAT THEY PLAN TO PROTEST FARID'S STATEMENTS TO ARAB LEAGUE SECRETARIAT IN CAIRO. BOTH BELIEVE THAT STATEMENTS BY FARID WENT BEYOND HIS AUTHORITY AND HIS COMPETENCE.

6. SAUDI CHARGE IS PARTICULARLY INCENSED. HE SPOKE WITH CREWMAN OF IRAQI SHIP IN MOGADISCIO HARBOR LAST WEEK AND WAS TOLD SHIP HAD CALLED AT BERBERA ON WAY TO MOGADISCIO BUT HAD BEEN RESTRICTED IN ITS PORT MOVEMENTS BECAUSE LARGE SECTOR WAS OFF LIMITS TO ALL BUT SOVIET VESSELS. HE IS OF COURSE CONVINCED BERBERA IS LOCATION OF SOVIET BASE.

7. WE DOUBT THAT SALEH FARID'S STATEMENTS MARK END OF GSDR ATTEMPT TO ROUT SOVIET BASE ALLEGATIONS.  
HAMRICK UNQUOTE KISSINGER

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